

Why boundary scripts matter (*and how to use this pack*)

When life gets full—work, home, school asks, activities—every “small” request can feel like the last straw. Boundaries are not walls or ultimatums; **they’re clarity**. They shine a gentle light on what you can offer and what you cannot, so your time, energy, and relationships stay healthy.

This pack gives you polite, firm, fill-in-the-blank scripts for the moments that most often drain busy families: partner dynamics, kids’ activity logistics, and PTA/teacher requests. Each script keeps the tone warm while protecting the limits you need.

Why boundaries help

- **Protect your energy.** Saying “no” (or “not now”) reduces overcommitment, decision fatigue, and resentment—so you can show up fully for the “yeses” that matter.
- **Model healthy behavior.** Kids learn by watching. When you hold a respectful boundary, they see what self-respect, consent, and time management look like.
- **Improve relationships.** Clear expectations reduce friction. Partners, coaches, and teachers can collaborate better when they know what’s realistic.
- **Align time with values.** Boundaries direct your limited time toward family connection, rest, and meaningful work.
- **Lower stress reactivity.** Having ready-to-use words calms your nervous system. You don’t have to invent language in the heat of the moment.

The Sunburst boundary formula (**kind + specific + brief**)

- **Appreciate** (optional but disarming): “Thanks for thinking of me...”
- **State the boundary** (one clear sentence): “I’m not available to...”
- **Offer a workable alternative** (when appropriate): “...but I can [X] or [Y].”
- **Hold the line** (repeat calmly if needed): “That won’t work for me.”

Short, specific sentences beat long explanations. You don’t owe a life story to set a limit.

How to personalize the scripts

- **Swap the brackets:** [name], [day], [time], [amount], [reason].
- **Choose one limiter:** frequency (once/month), time window (after 6pm), scope (store-bought only).
- **Keep your voice:** if you’d say “Hey,” keep “Hey.” If you’d say “Thanks,” keep “Thanks.”
- **Edit for your culture and school norms**—the tone should feel natural where you live and work.

Delivery tips that make boundaries land

- **Tone & body:** warm face, steady voice, shoulders relaxed.
- **Timing:** deliver early (before calendars fill) and in the channel that fits (text/email for schedules, face-to-face for delicate topics).
- **One ask, one answer:** resist over-explaining; one clear sentence is enough.
- **Pause:** after you speak, stop talking. Let the other person react without rushing to fill the silence.

When they push back (stay kind, stay steady):

- **Acknowledge + repeat** (the “broken-record” technique):
“I hear you—it’s a great event. I’m still not available Friday. I can help next month.”
- **Name the trade-off:**
“If I add this, I remove my only recharge window. I’m keeping that boundary.”
- **Offer the next best step:**
“I can donate supplies by Wednesday, or share the sign-up link with three parents.”

Every script in this pack includes a “They say... / You say...” section with language for the most common pushbacks, so you’re never left searching for words.

What’s inside (and how to use it fast):

- **Partners (1–5):** Shared load, quiet hours, budget caps, device-free dinner, clear hand-offs.
Pick one this week—read it out loud, then use it once.
- **Kids’ Activities (6–10):** One-activity rule, carpool limits, last-minute sign-ups, snack duty, weekend start times.
Choose the one that will save your next week the most stress.
- **PTA / Teacher Asks (11–15):** Volunteer frequency, bake sale alternatives, chaperone boundaries, email “office hours,” donation caps.
Decide your baseline, then copy-paste with your dates and amounts.

A 3-minute practice plan:

1. Highlight your top three scripts for this month.
2. Fill in the blanks and send one to yourself (text or email) to hear how it reads.
3. Use one script this week. Celebrate the win—even if it feels awkward the first time.

Notes:

PARTNERS (home rhythm & shared load)

1) Evening Recharge Time

Say:

- “I’m building a 20-minute recharge after [time]. I’ll be off duty then. After that, I’m back.”
- “From [time] to [time], I’m taking quiet time. If anything’s urgent, please knock and I’ll respond after.”

If they push back:

They say: “But we’re both busy.”

You say: “Exactly—and this helps me show up better for us. I’ll be more present after the 20 minutes.”

They say: “You don’t need that long.”

You say: “This is the time that works for me. If you want your own window tomorrow, let’s plan it.”

2) Budget for Extras

Say:

- “We’re capping extracurricular fees at [\$____] this month. Anything beyond waits until next month.”
- “That’s outside our budget for May. Let’s revisit in June.”

If they push back:

They say: “It’s just a little more.”

You say: “I hear that. We’re staying within the cap we set. We can put it first on next month’s list.”

They say: “You always say no.”

You say: “I’m saying yes to our plan. We’ll review it together on [date].”

3) Device-Free Dinner

Say:

- “Let’s keep dinner device free. I’m putting my phone away from [time] to [time].”
- “I’m silencing notifications during dinner so we can catch up.”

If they push back:

They say: “What if work pings?”

You say: “I’ll check after dinner. If it’s an emergency, they can call twice.”

They say: “I’m in the middle of something.”

You say: “Okay—let’s start in 5 minutes so you can wrap that up.”

KIDS' ACTIVITIES (sane schedules & logistics)

6) One Activity per Season

<p>Say:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “We’re doing one activity per season so evenings stay calm. This season we’re choosing [activity].”• “I know there are great options; we’re sticking with one for now.”	<p>If they push back:</p> <p>They say: “But [child] wants to do both.”</p> <p>You say: “I get it. We’ll put the second choice first on next season’s list.”</p> <p>They say: “Everyone else is doing more.”</p> <p>You say: “We’re choosing what works for our family rhythm.”</p>
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7) Carpool Limits

<p>Say:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “I can drive on [days]. I’m not available other days.”• “I’m happy to cover pickup this week; I can’t commit next week.”	<p>If they push back:</p> <p>They say: “Could you add Friday too?”</p> <p>You say: “I can’t this time. If anything changes, I’ll let you know.”</p> <p>They say: “We really need you.”</p> <p>You say: “I understand. I’m not available that day.”</p>
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8) Last-Minute Sign-ups

<p>Say:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Our policy is 24 hours’ notice for new activities. We’ll pass this time.”• “We need more lead time. Let’s look at the next opportunity.”	<p>If they push back:</p> <p>They say: “It’s the last spot!”</p> <p>You say: “We’re okay skipping it. We’ll plan ahead for the next one.”</p> <p>They say: “It won’t happen again.”</p> <p>You say: “Good to know—please send details earlier next time.”</p>
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Notes:

PTA / TEACHER ASKS (volunteering & communication)

11) Volunteer Frequency

<p>Say:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “I can volunteer once per month. Please add me to [month] for [task].”• “I’m available for one slot this semester—[date/time].”	<p>If they push back:</p> <p>They say: “We need weekly support.” You say: “Weekly doesn’t work for me. I can do one slot monthly.”</p> <p>They say: “Can you do two this month?” You say: “I’m keeping it at one. If anything opens next month, I’ll reach out.”</p>
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12) Bake Sale—Buy Instead of Bake

<p>Say:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “I’ll contribute by purchasing items and dropping them off by [time].”• “I’m not baking this round; I can donate [\$____] or supplies.”	<p>If they push back:</p> <p>They say: “We prefer homemade.” You say: “I understand. Purchased works best for us this week.”</p> <p>They say: “Could you bake next time?” You say: “Possibly—please check back closer to the date.”</p>
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13) Field Trip Chaperone

<p>Say:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “I can’t chaperone this trip, but I’m available to prep materials on [date].”• “I’m passing this time. Please keep me in mind for [future trip/month].”	<p>If they push back:</p> <p>They say: “We’re short on adults.” You say: “I’m not able to attend. I hope you find coverage.”</p> <p>They say: “It would mean a lot.” You say: “I hear that—I still can’t make it.”</p>
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Notes:

Say:

- “I check school emails on [days] after [time]. If urgent, please mark it as such and I’ll reply then.”
- “For quick questions, I’ll respond within 48 hours on weekdays.”

If they push back:

They say: “Can you reply tonight?”

You say: “I’ll respond during my next email window on [day/time].”

They say: “We need an answer now.”

You say: “If it’s time-sensitive, a call to the office is best. I’ll follow up at [time].”

15) Donation Requests Cap

Say:

- “We’re capping school donations at [\$____] this term. We’re tapped out for now.”
- “We already contributed this month; we’ll revisit next month.”

If they push back:

They say: “It’s for a great cause.”

You say: “Agreed—and we’ve hit our limit. Wishing you a successful drive.”

They say: “Just a small amount?”

You say: “We’re staying with our boundary this term.”

Sunburst Coaching & Consulting, LLC is a warm, evidence-informed coaching and training practice for overwhelmed professionals and teams. We specialize in helping speech-language pathologists, educators, allied-health providers, and other professionals set boundaries, streamline workload, and build routines that actually stick. Through personalized coaching, small-group programs, practical workshops/webinars, and a growing library of ready-to-use resources, we turn insight into simple, sustainable action. Our approach is kind, clear, and doable—so you can show up with more energy, focus, and joy at work and at home.

Services

- **1:1 Coaching:** Tailored support to clarify priorities, set boundaries, and design week-to-week routines.
- **Small-Group Coaching / Cohorts:** Guided accountability and tools for sustainable change with peers.
- **Workshops & Webinars (CE-friendly):** Practical, interactive trainings for schools, clinics, and teams.
- **Consulting for Schools/Clinics:** Burnout prevention, workload systems, leadership and team culture.
- **Resource Vault (Freebies + Toolkits):** Checklists, scripts, planners, and mini-courses to use right away.
- **Speaking & PD:** Keynotes and professional development tailored to your audience and goals.

Need help tailoring these for your family? Book a free Discovery Call, and we’ll script your top three together. Say no kindly—without guilt. www.sunburstcoachingconsulting.com/book-a-call